Tacoma School District

Study Session

Published on October 14, 2025 at 7:33 PM PDT
Amended on November 12, 2025 at 7:27 PM PST

Date and Time

Thursday October 16, 2025 at 6:00 PM PDT

Location

The Tacoma Public Schools Board of Directors will meet for a Study Session on the date and time above in the 4th Floor Auditorium at the Central Administration Building. All regular Board Business Meetings, Committee of t he Whole, and Study Session meetings are open public meetings and everyone is encouraged to attend. Execut ive sessions are closed to the public. Public parking and the main entrance are located on the west side of the b uilding at South G Street.

ACCOMMODATION

Persons requiring accommodations for a disability in order to attend a Board meeting (including the services of a sign language interpreter or those who want to speak at a board meeting but are advised not to attend in-person due to health risks) should contact the Board Office at 253.571.1443 before 4:30 p.m. at least three working days before the meeting to ensure that the District has time to implement appropriate accommodations.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Tacoma Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, homelessness, disability, neurodivergence, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator, Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator, and Title IX Coordinator:

Tiffany Davis-Brantley
253-571-1252, civilrights@tacoma.k12.wa.us

Section 504 Coordinator:
Laura Tuman
253-571-1086, 504Coordinator@tacoma.k12.wa.us

Tacoma Public Schools
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1357
Tacoma, WA 98401-1357
www.tacomaschools.org

INTERPRETER
Individuals requiring a language interpreter for a Board meeting for any language, other than a sign language interpreter, should contact the Board Office at 253-571-1443 before 4:30 p.m., at least three working days before the meeting to ensure that the District has sufficient time to identify an interpreter.

Agenda

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Flag Salute

C. Land Acknowledgment

Tacoma Public Schools acknowledges that we are on the traditional ancestral and historical lands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the Puyallup Tribe. This acknowledgment serves as a first step in honoring our nearest tribal neighbors and partners who have inhabited this region since time immemorial, and to whom we give thanks for allowing us passage to their lands. We shall intentionally create inclusive and respectful partnerships that honor indigenous cultures, histories, identities, and sociopolitical realities.

D. Roll Call

General Counsel Gbenro will call the roll.

II. BOARD GOALS

A. BOARD GOAL RESEARCH: PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

ADOPTED BOARD GOAL NO. 1:
The Board will conduct a comprehensive study of the appropriate use of cell phones during school hours.

B. REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS

- Edna Travis Elementary School
- Baker Middle School
- Mt. Tahoma High School

C. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR "CONSIDERATIONS"

III. LEVY OVERVIEWS

A. LEVY OVERVIEWS OF BALLOT PROPOSITIONS NO. 1 AND NO. 2

BALLOT PROPOSITION NO. 1: EDUCATION PROGRAMS OPERATIONS REPLACEMENT LEVY

BALLOT PROPOSITION NO. 2: K-12 TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADES TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENT LEVY

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Coversheet

BOARD GOAL RESEARCH: PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Section: II. BOARD GOALS
Item: A. BOARD GOAL RESEARCH: PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material:
TPS_POLICY.REVIEW_PERSONAL.ELECTRONIC.DEVICES.IN.SCHOOLS.pdf
ELECTRONIC.DEVICES_CONSIDERATIONS.pdf

Policy Review: Personal Electronic Devices in Schools

October 16 Board Study Session

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Current Policies and Regulations

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Policy/Regulation 2022:
Electronic Resources & Internet Safety

- Authorizes the Superintendent to adopt acceptable use guidelines for electronic resources.
- Grants schools the authority to create rules for personal electronic device USE at each school.

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Policy/Regulation 6973: Acceptable Use of Digital Resources

- Permits personal electronic device access to the district network subject to content filtering.
- Communicates that users of the district network have no privacy expectations connected with the use, including personal electronic device use.

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- Grants schools the authority to create rules for personal electronic device USE at each school.

Policy/Regulation 6973: Acceptable Use of Digital Resources

- Permits personal electronic device access to the district network subject to content filtering.
- Communicates that users of the district network have no privacy expectations connected with the use, including personal electronic device use.

Policy/Regulation 3240/3241: Student Conduct and Discipline

- Establishes the school's authority to restrict or prohibit items or behaviors that disrupt learning.
- Outlines what kind of discipline responses are allowed for violations of school rules and details due process requirements.

Policy and Regulation 2022/R

Electronic Resources and Internet Safety

From Regulation 2022R:

In accordance with all District policies and procedures, students and staff may use personally owned electronic devices (e.g. laptops, mobile devices, and e-readers) as a supplement to further the educational and research mission of the District in addition to District-assigned electronic devices. School staff will retain the final authority in deciding when and how students may use personal electronic devices on school grounds and during the school day. Absent a specific and articulated need (e.g. assistive technology), students do not have an absolute right to possess or use personal electronic devices at school. Students using personally-owned devices must make the device available to the District in the event of an investigation involving inappropriate behavior (e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination). The District will not provide technology support for personal electronic devices.

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Policy and Regulation 6973/R

Acceptable Use Policy for Digital Resources

From Regulation 6973R:

The district may monitor and review the information to analyze the use of systems, compliance with policies, conduct audits, review performance, or obtain information for reporting. Asset tracking and remote support tools are not to be used by district staff to track users outside of our network physically, and any such usage is strictly prohibited.

The district will maintain and provide a guest network to allow internet access for personal digital devices when possible. Personal digital devices, such as laptops, notebook computers, tablets, and smartphones, are permitted to connect to the district networks via the TPS guest wireless network.

Connecting to the guest network is a "best-effort" and is subject to strict filtering.

The district will not support or troubleshoot technical or software issues on personal digital devices. Exceptions may be granted based on prior approved business needs.

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Policy and Regulation 6973/R

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From Regulation 6973R:

The district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store, without prior notice, information about the content and usage of:

- The district network, including when accessed on students' personal electronic devices and devices provided by the district, such as laptops, netbooks, and tablets;
- User files and disk space utilization;
- User applications and bandwidth utilization;
- User document files, folders, and electronic communications;
- Email; Internet access; and
- All information transmitted or received in connection with the network and email use.

Staff, students, or other users should not expect privacy when using the district's network..

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Policy and Regulation 3240 and 3241/R

Student Conduct and Student Discipline

From Regulation 3240R:

A student who engages in a behavioral violation may be subject to discipline or other forms of discipline as defined in Regulation 3241R. Behavioral violations include, but are not limited to:

- Cellular telephones/Smartphones or other electronics – Possessing or using a cellular telephone/smartphone or other electronic device causing a disruption to the educational process.

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Additional Resources

Shared by: Director Leon

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Resources in support of schools going phone free*:

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Possible Outcomes include less:

- Distractions
- Drama/stress
- Cyberbullying
- Fights on Social Media
- Cheating
- Mid-class absenteeism

***Sources: © Phone Free Schools Movement (2024) and ProtectYoungEyes**

and can include more:

- Engagement
- Attendance
- Efficiency
- Teacher morale/retention

Information condensed from the following:

- #PhoneFreeSchools
- Low-Tech Classrooms

Coversheet

REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS

Section: II. BOARD GOALS
Item: B. REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material:
TRAVIS.ELEMENTARY_CELL.PHONES.pdf
BAKER.MIDDLE.SCHOOL_25-26_CELL.PHONES.pdf
MT.TAHOMA.HIGH.SCHOOL_PERSONAL.DEVICE.POLICY.2025-26.pdf

TRAVIS ELEMENTARY

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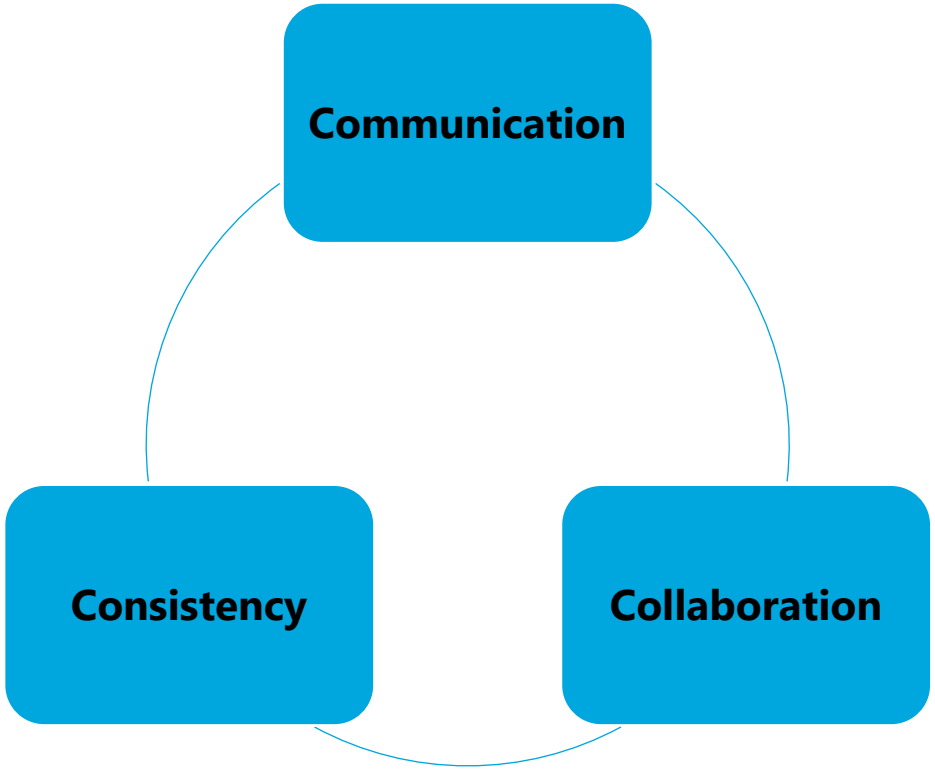
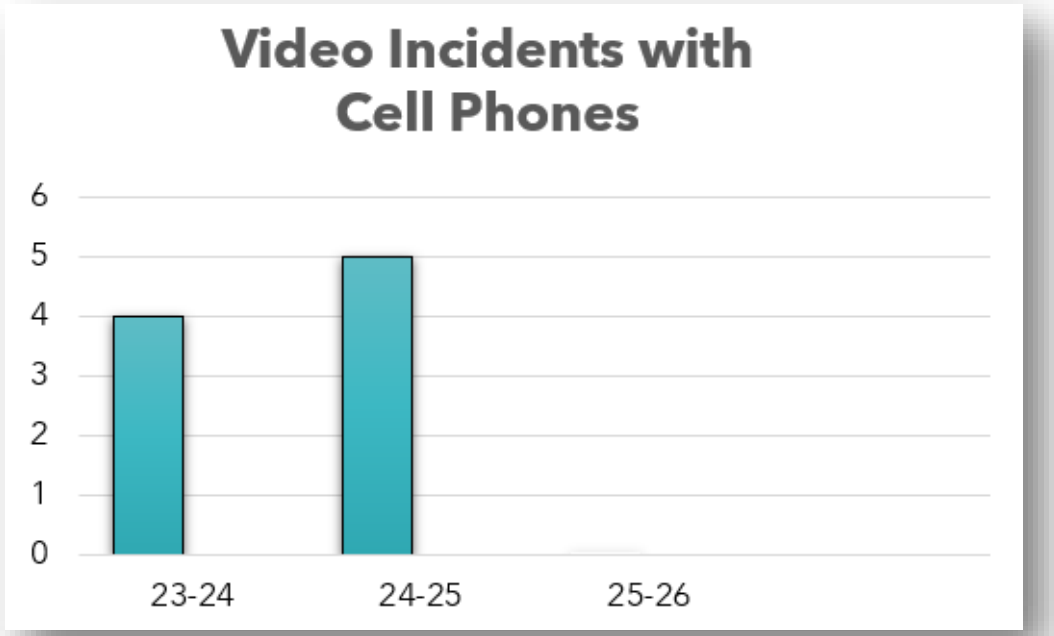




Cell Phone Policy

Baker Middle School

Cell Phone Policy:

To support student success, foster a positive school environment, and minimize distractions, Baker classrooms, hallways during passing periods, and the cafeteria during lunch will be *cell phone, Bluetooth, and headphone free*.

What does this mean?

- **No use of cell phones or Bluetooth headphones is allowed anywhere inside the building during the school day.**
- Students must keep their cell phones **off or on silent** and stored in their **backpacks**.

This consistent, school-wide policy is designed to:

- Reduce distractions during learning
- Encourage face-to-face social interactions
- Support social-emotional growth
- Help maintain a bully-free environment

Student Expectations for Cell Phone Use:

- **Cell phones may only be used outside the building** before and after school.
- Inside the school, **cell phones may only be used in the office** to contact a parent or guardian.
- During the school day, phones must remain in backpacks. If a student needs a backpack to store their phone, the school can provide support.
- **Headphones may only be used in class** for academic purposes and only when directed by a teacher.
- **Wireless earbuds or Bluetooth headphones are not allowed at any time.**
- Students who use phones or headphones during the school day will be subject to corrective action.
- The school is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged phones or headphones.

Note: During safety drills or emergencies, **cell phone use is strictly prohibited** to ensure clear communication and student safety. All emergency communication will come from school administration.

The Why:

- A response to student mental health and social development
- To address a decline in academic engagement
- In response to current research
- Safety

The How:

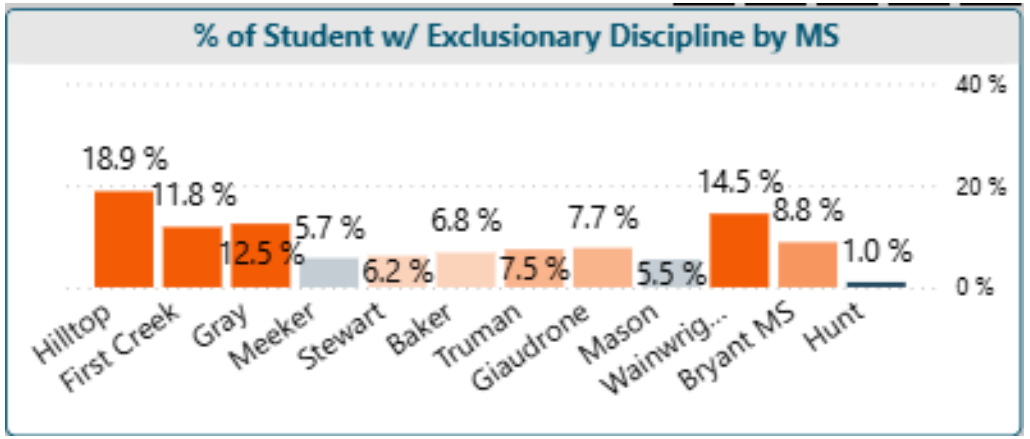
- Clear and transparent communication with families, staff and students.
  - ✓Beginning in the summer of 2024 sent communication home to families that included the research, the why, and new systems of support.
  - ✓Communicated with students through grade level assemblies and advisory lesson
  - ✓Communicated with staff in meeting and through actions of support
- Created systems in classrooms and office to safely store and collect phones.
- Listening sessions with families and students

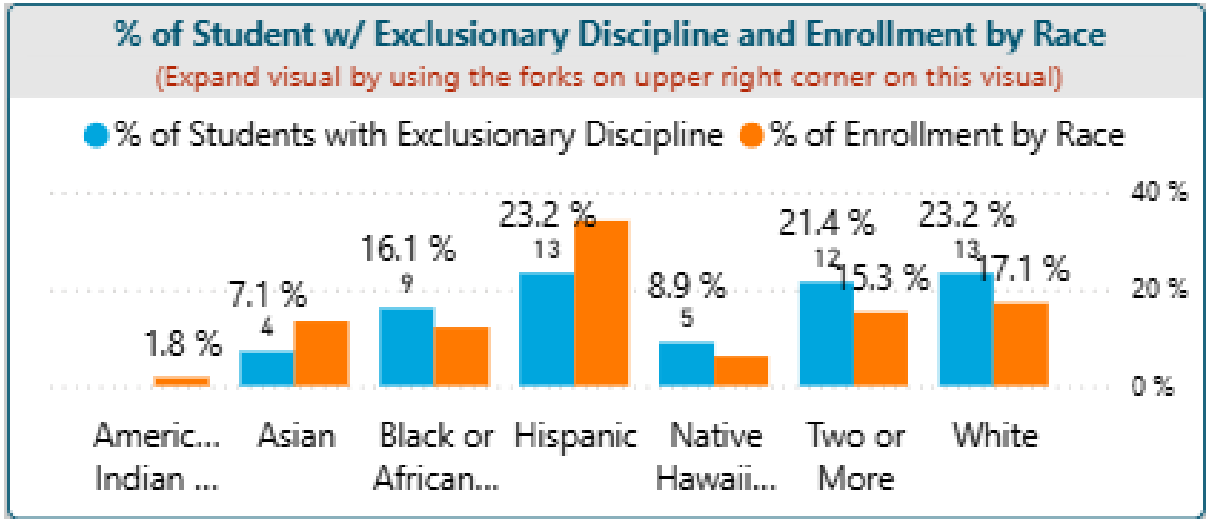
The Results:

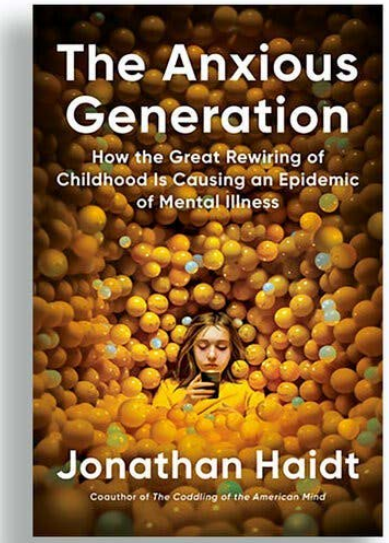
- Increased student engagement
- Improved Social Interaction
- New sense of freedom
- Elimination of on-campus cyber bullying
- Reduced on-campus fights
- Teacher appreciation and reduction in classroom referrals

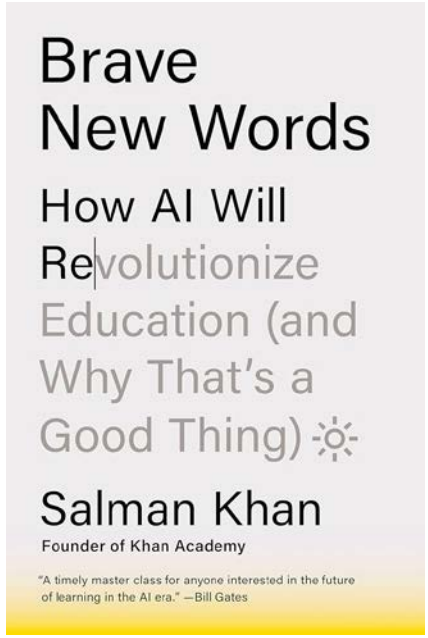
Student Testimonials

- *"I feel safer."*
- *"I feel like I can be my true self."*
- *"I didn't think I would like it, but I'm a better student because of it."*
- *"There is way less drama."*


% of Student w/ Exclusionary Discipline by MS
40 %
20 %
0 %
18.9 %
11.8 %
12.5 %
5.7 %
6.2 %
6.8 %
7.5 %
7.7 %
5.5 %
14.5 %
8.8 %
1.0 %
Hilltop
First Creek
Gray
Meeker
Stewart
Baker
Truman
Giaudrone
Mason
Wainwrig...
Bryant MS
Hunt


% of Student w/ Exclusionary Discipline and Enrollment by Race
(Expand visual by using the forks on upper right corner on this visual)
% of Students with Exclusionary Discipline
% of Enrollment by Race
40 %
20 %
0 %
1.8 %
7.1 %
4
16.1 %
9
23.2 %
13
8.9 %
5
21.4 %
12
15.3 %
23.2 %
13
17.1 %
Americ... Indian ...
Asian
Black or African...
Hispanic
Native Hawaii...
Two or More
White





The Impact of Smartphone Use on Course Comprehension and Psychological Well-Being in the College Classroom

Melissa Huey [1,✉], David Giguere [2,✉]

▸ Author information ▸ Article notes ▸ Copyright and License information

2025-26 MTHS Personal Device Policy

- At the end of ‘24-’25 we asked teachers what would help them feel more supported with devices headed into this year.
- With that feedback in mind here is the revised, current, policy.
  - Intervention 1- Whole class reminders to put personal devices away.
  - Intervention 2- Quick 1:1 conversation in class. Detention assigned.
  - Intervention 3- Call to administration/security to remove the student. Family is called and given options:
    - Student returns to class but the cell phone is left in the office.
    - Student does not have to return the cell phone, and the student is not allowed into class.
- We have also added a “Cell Phone Plan” where students who continuously struggle with the expectations will turn their phones into the office at the beginning of the day and pick up at the end. This can go for any length of time.
- Challenges: Volume at the detention level, implementation w/ fidelity across the system.
- Successes: Family partnership, lowered usage rates, anecdotally better engagement with curriculum and peers.

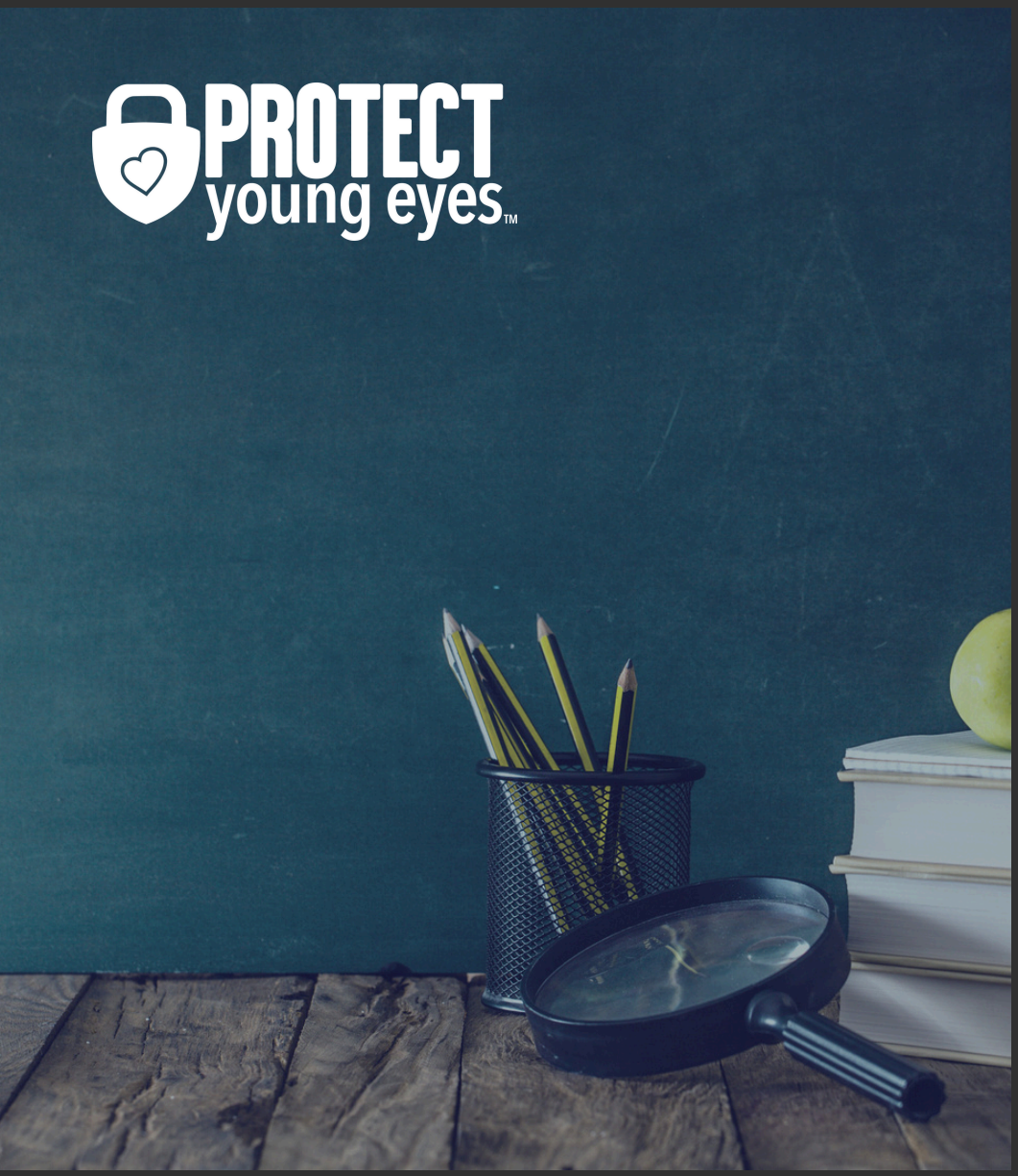
Coversheet

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR "CONSIDERATIONS"

Section:	II. BOARD GOALS
Item:	C. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR "CONSIDERATIONS"
Purpose:	FYI
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	#phonefreeschools - Research.pdf Low-Tech Classrooms - PYE Research.pdf Benefits.of.Phone.Free.Schools.pdf

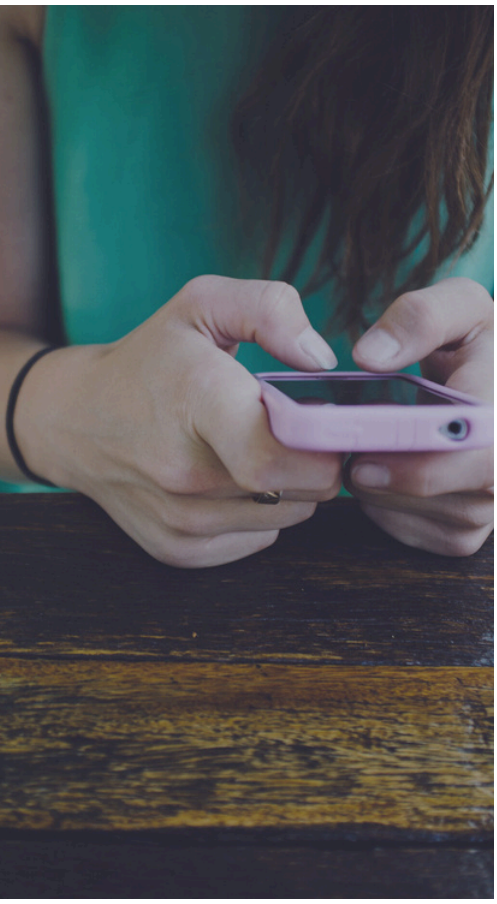
#PHONEFREESCHOOLS

Research supporting the elimination of personal digital devices in schools.



December 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS



POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FROM DECREASING EXPOSURE TO DIGITAL MEDIA DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

Increases in Family Partnerships
Teens who decrease overall smartphone use report building better, stronger, healthier relationships with themselves and others (1).

Higher Academic Scores
Studies show that when smartphones are away, test scores increase up to 14% among lowest lowest-achieving students (2).

Improvements in Student Mental Health
The total number of teenage girls who experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness increased by 58% between 2011 and 2021. Thoughts of attempting suicide also increased by 58% during the same timeframe (3).

Decreases in School Exposure to Pornography
School networks are required to use filters under the Children's Internet Protection Act. Personal devices using data plans may not provide adequate protection. Let's keep porn out of schools.

Stronger support for Anti-Cyberbullying Laws
Almost every state has laws that expressly criminalize electronic forms of harassment. The only states that don’t are Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Wyoming (4).

Increased Dependency on District-Provided Devices
(If applicable) The District has adequate internet-ready devices for students to use, which are all monitored.

Increased Grade Honesty
A whopping 65% of students admit to seeing another student use a smartphone to cheat on a test (5).

Decrease in Student Incidents
Principals notice a correlation between "away for the day" policies and a corresponding decrease in behavioral incidents.

REFERENCES

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FROM DECREASING EXPOSURE TO DIGITAL MEDIA DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

1. Bahrampour, T. (2018, January 22). Teens who spend less time in front of screens are happier – up to a point, new research shows. Washington Post. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/inspired-life/wp/2018/01/22/teens-who-spend-less-time-in-front-of-screens-are-happier-up-to-a-point-new-research-shows/
2. Glass, A. & Kang, M. (2019). Dividing attention in the classroom reduces exam performance. Education Psychology, 39(3), 395-408. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2018.1489046
3. Centers for Disease Control. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf
4. Gaggle. Is cyberbullying illegal in your state? Retrieved from https://www.gaggle.net/blog/speaks/is-cyberbullying-illegal-in-your-state/
5. Morin, A. (2019, August 19). How Teens Use Technology to Cheat in School. Very Well Family. Retrieved from https://www.verywellfamily.com/how-teens-use-technology-to-cheat-at-school-4065364

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Impacts of screens on learning:

Abstract 1: Students who were not using their mobile phones during a video lecture wrote down 62% more information in their notes, took more detailed notes, were able to recall more detailed information from the lecture, and scored a full letter grade and a half higher on a multiple choice test than those students who were actively using their mobile phones.

Kuznekoff et al. (2013). Non-Academic Internet Use in the Classroom is Negatively Related to Classroom Learning Regardless of Intellectual Ability. Communication Education v. 62, 233-252. Retrieved from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03634523.2013.767917

Abstract 2: Participants viewed a 30-minute videotaped lecture during which they were interrupted by receiving text messages requiring responses. Results indicated that the High Texting group scored significantly worse (10.6% lower) than the No/Low Texting Interruption group.

Rosen, et al. (2011). An Empirical Examination of the Educational Impact of Text Message-Induced Task Switching in the Classroom: Educational Implications and Strategies to Enhance Learning. Psicologia Educativa,163-177. Retrieved from https://www.psychologytoday.com/sites/default/files/attachments/40095/anempiricalexaminationoftheeducationalimpactoftextmessage-inducedtaskswitchingintheclassroom-educati.pdf

Abstract 3: Results from two experiments indicate that even when people are successful at maintaining sustained attention—as when avoiding the temptation to check their phones—the mere presence of these devices reduces available cognitive capacity. Moreover, these cognitive costs are highest for those highest smartphone dependence.

Ward et al. (2017). Brain Drain: The Mere Presence of One's Own Smartphone Reduces Available Cognitive Capacity. JACR, 140-154. Retrieved from https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/691462

Abstract 4: Results of two studies reported here provide further evidence that the "mere presence" of a cell phone may be sufficiently distracting to produce diminished attention and deficits in task performance, especially for tasks with greater attentional and cognitive demands., especially for tasks with greater attentional and cognitive demands.

Thorton et al. (2014). Brain Drain: The mere presence of a cell phone may be distracting: Implications for attention and task performance. Social Psychology v. 45, 479-488. Retrieved from https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2014-52302-001.

Abstract 5: A longitudinal study published in 2020 looked at cognitive and emotional functioning in children over time, between ages 4 and 8, measured against their daily screen time. The study found excessive screen time led to emotional dysregulation and negatively affected mathematics and literacy in school-age students.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Impacts of screens on learning (cont.):

Cerniglia, L., Cimino, S. & Ammaniti, M. (2020). What are the effects of screen time on emotion regulation and academic achievements? A three-wave longitudinal study on children from 4 to 8 years of age. Sage Journals v. 19, Issue 2. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1476718X20969846

Abstract 6: In this systematic review and meta-analysis of data from 42 studies, a greater quantity of screen use (i.e., hours per day/week) was negatively associated with child language, while the better quality of screen use (i.e., educational programs and co-viewing with caregivers) were positively associated with child language skills.

Madigan, S., McArthur, C., Anhorn, C., et al. (2020). Associations Between Screen Use and Child Language Skills: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. Jama Pediatrics. Retrieved from: https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2762864.

Akpan, N. (2017, May 4). Toddlers' screen time linked to slower speech development, study finds. PBS. Retrieved from https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/toddlers-screen-time-linked-slower-speech-development-studyfinds

Baker, J. (2019, March 30). 'Major distraction': School dumps iPads, returns to paper textbooks. The Sydney Morning Herald. Retrieved from https://www.smh.com.au/education/major-distraction-school-dumpsipads-returns-to-paper-textbooks-20190329-p5191r.html

Barshay, J. (2019, June 10). Research shows lower test scores for fourth graders who use tablets in schools. The Hechinger Report. Retrieved from https://hechingerreport.org/research-shows-lower-test-scores-for-fourth-graders-who-use-tablets-in-schools/

Bates, S. (2018, October 25). Heavy multitaskers have reduced memory. Stanford News. Retrieved from https://news.stanford.edu/2018/10/25/decade-data-reveals-heavy-multitaskers-reduced-memory-psychologist-says/

Beland, L. & Murphy, R. (2015). Ill Communication: Technology, distraction, & student performance. Retrieved from https://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1350.pdf

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Impacts of screens on learning (cont.):

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Pornography in School - Findings from Common Sense Media (2022) *Teens and Pornography Report*

- 41% reported seeing pornography during the school day; 44% of these teens reported viewing pornography on school-owned devices (this equals 13% of all teen respondents).
- 31% of this group [during the school day group] viewed pornography while attending school in person
- Teens who attended private schools (including religious schools) were nearly twice as likely as teens who said they attended traditional public schools to say they had ever seen pornography during the school day (50% vs. 26%).
- 41% of respondents who attended charter or magnet schools said they had seen pornography during the school day versus 27% of teens who were homeschooled.

Full PDF: https://www.commonsensemedia.org/research/teens-and-pornography

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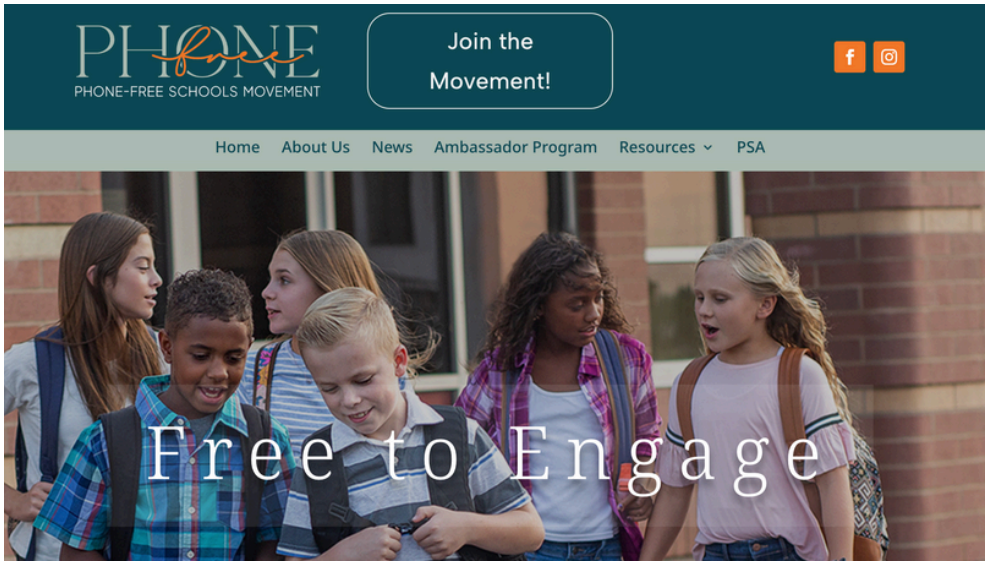
Articles About Schools That Went Phone-Free:

- Here's how a private school in Kalona went cellphone-free.
- Second-largest school district in US creates 'Phone-Free School Day' that bans devices — even during breaks
- Thetford Academy Goes Phone-Free
- Ahead of cell bans, this phone-free school is thriving
- Which States Have Banned Cell Phones?
- When I Went Phone-Free My School Day Changed
- The Case for Phone-Free Schools
- These Capital Region schools are going phone-free
- Troup Goes Phone-Free
- Hoover High School Goes Phone-Free
- (from the UK) Ormiston Academies Trust phasing out access to smartphones for around 35,000 pupils at its 42 state schools across the country.

Information from The Phone-Free School Movement:

- https://phonefreeschoolsmovement.org/



PROTECT young eyes™

EXAMPLE POLICIES - "AWAY FOR THE DAY"

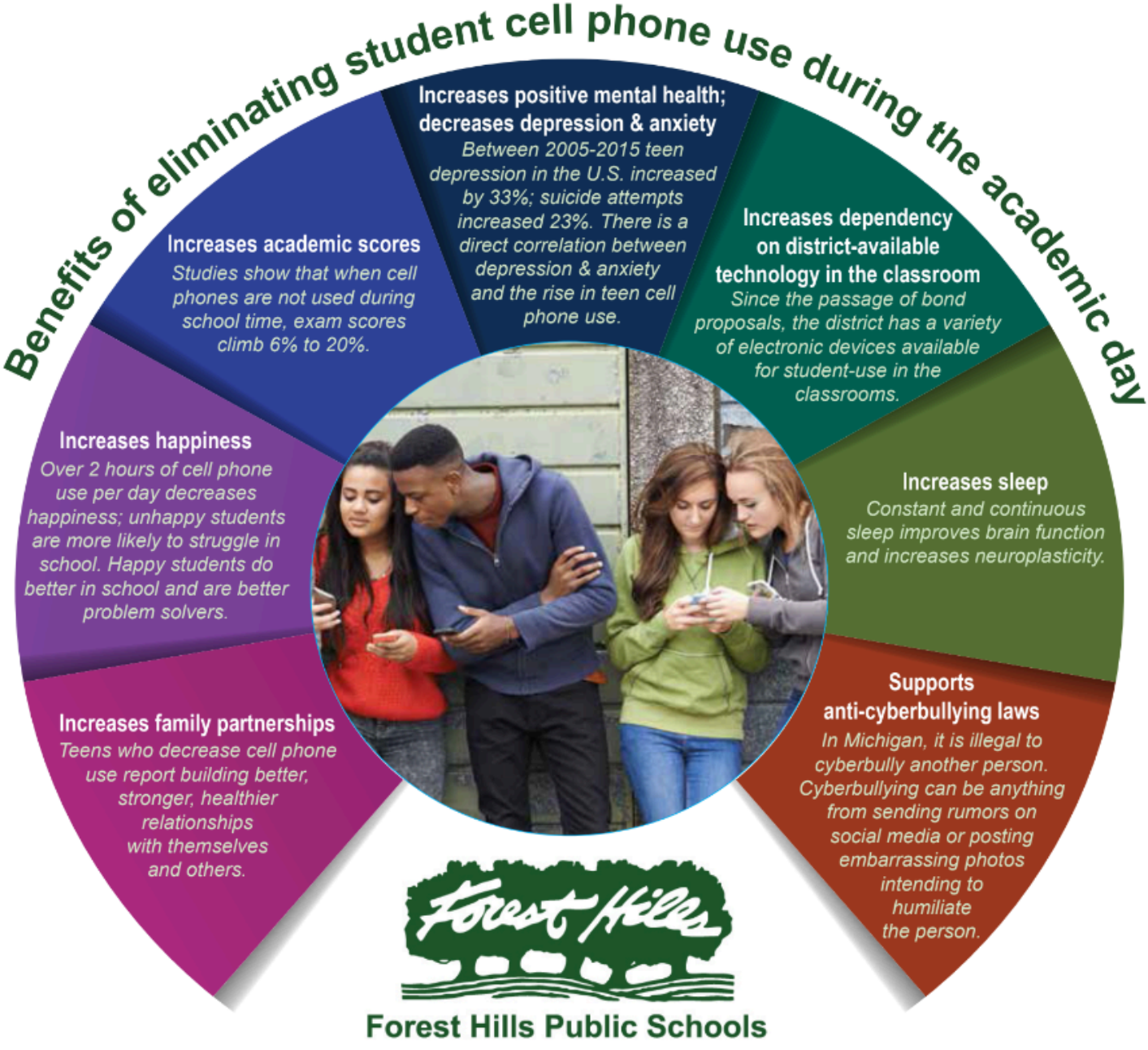
- Review this database on United States schools with policies that address the use of personal devices during the school day: [Phone-Free School Policy Database]

Protect Young Eyes - #phonefreeschools

PHONE-FREE BENEFITS

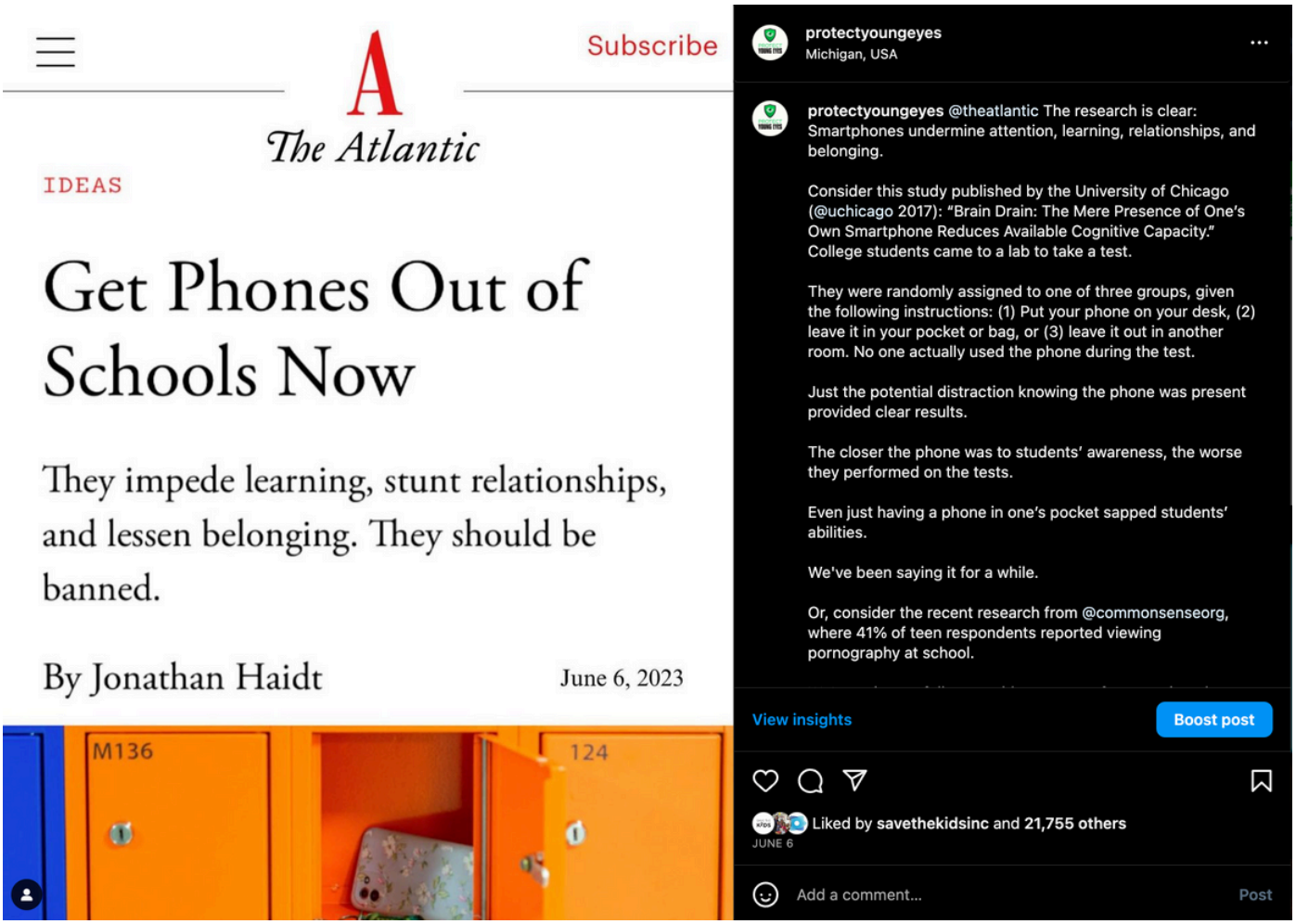
From Forest Hills Public Schools, MI

- Increases family partnerships.
- Increases happiness.
- Increases academic scores.
- Increases positive mental health and decreases depression and anxiety.
- Increases dependency on district-available technology in the classroom.
- Increases sleep.
- Supports anti-cyberbullying laws.



IT WENT VIRAL...

Our Instagram post on June 6, 2023, about the Atlantic article attracted a massive response from parents and educators.

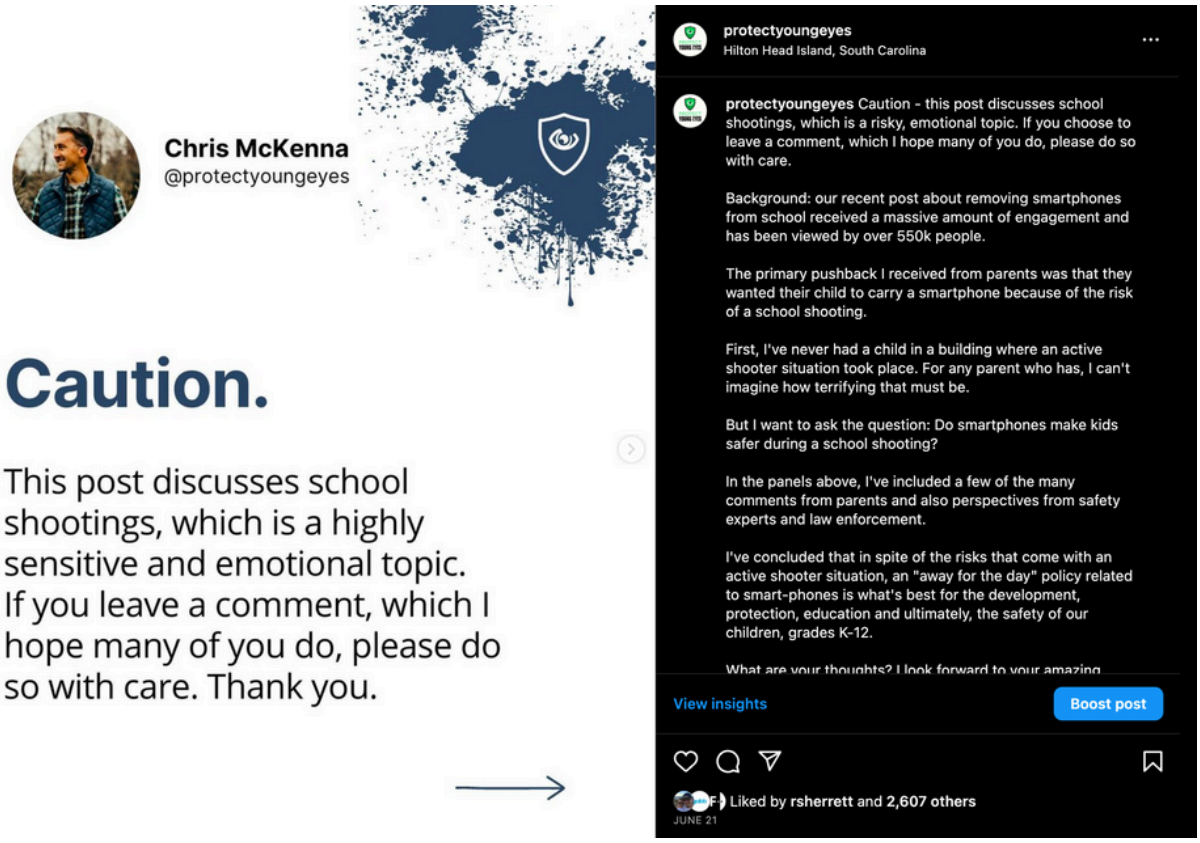


Instagram Post

Facebook Post

WHAT ABOUT ACTIVE SHOOTERS?

Our Instagram post on June 21, 2023, lays out the pros and cons of kids having personal, digital devices and their ability to respond during an active shooter situation. Our conclusion? Devices do not save kids. They need to pay attention to their surroundings, the adults in charge, and get out alive.



Instagram Post

Facebook Post

WHAT IS PROTECT YOUNG EYES?

Founded by Chris McKenna, Protect Young Eyes uses:

- A constantly updated website that explains the latest digital trends;
- Live presentations at schools and churches to students, educators, and parents around the country;
- The Table - our private community for caregivers.
- Our Be Tech Ready in-class digital wellness curriculum for grades K-12.

We show families, schools, and churches how to create safer digital places. Interested in learning more? Contact Michele, the Executive Master of Details at ProtectYoungEyes.com, or contact us via one of the channels below.

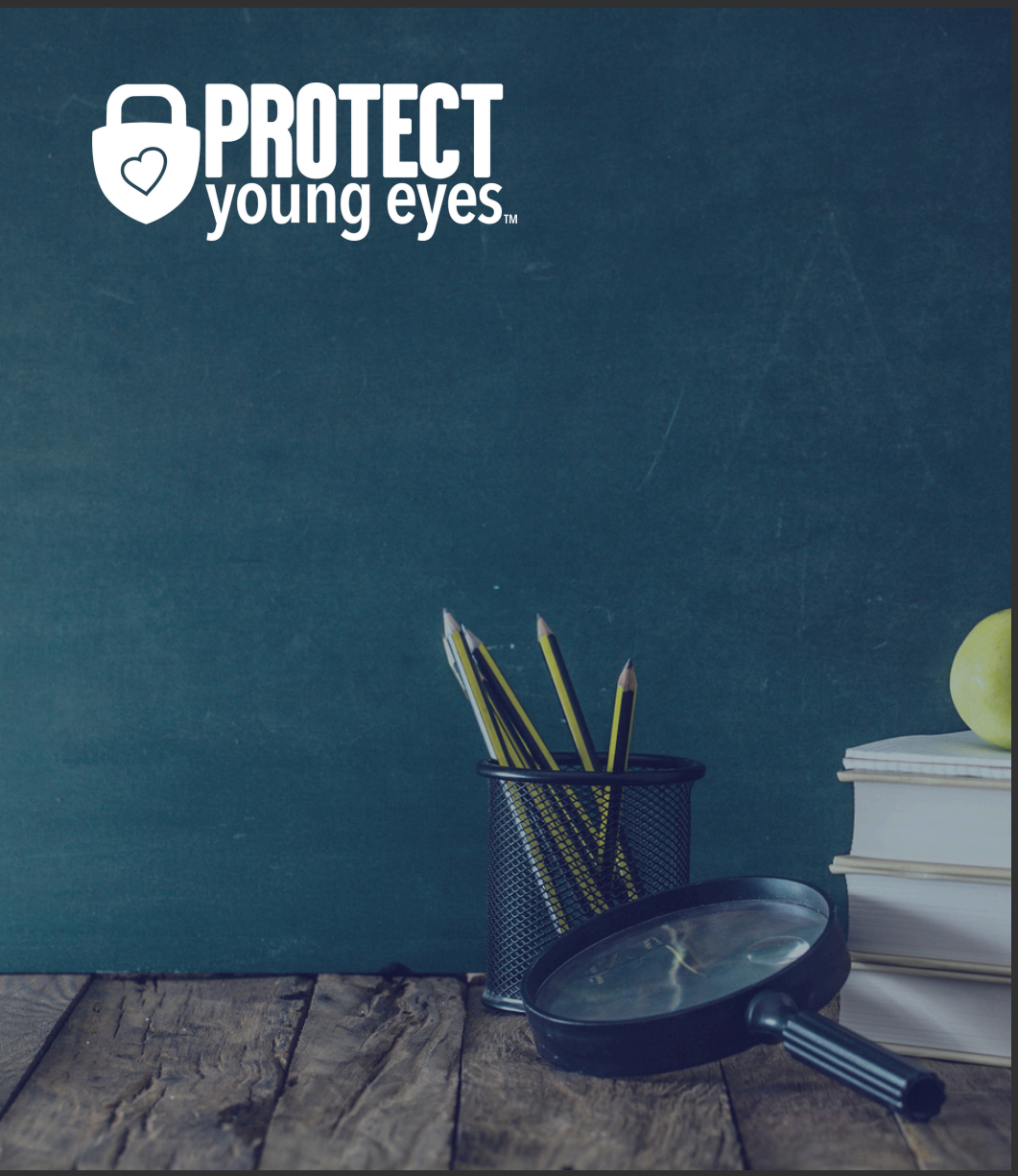
Mobile: 616-450-6719
Email: info@protectyoungeyes.com
Website: protectyoungeyes.com

ProtectYoungEyes Protect Young Eyes @protecteyes

PROTECT young eyes™

LOW-TECH CLASSROOMS

Research supporting a significant decrease in the amount of tech used in learning.



November 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR. THE HUMAN BRAIN LEARNS BEST IN ANALOG.

(EXCERPTS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

Understanding how reading on paper differs from reading on screens requires an explanation of how the human brain interprets written language.

There's a physicality to reading. Our children need to touch and feel what they're learning. They can't help it. It's how they're wired.

Although letters and words are symbols representing sounds and ideas, the brain also regards them as physical objects.

According to Maryanne Wolf, author of Reader, Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World, "Our understanding is that print advantages slower, deeper processes in the reading brain. You can use a screen to complement, to teach certain skills, but you don't want a child to learn to read through a screen."

We are not born with brain circuits dedicated to reading, because we did not invent writing until relatively recently in human history.

So in childhood, the brain improvises a brand-new circuit for reading by weaving together various ribbons of neural tissue devoted to other abilities, such as speaking, motor coordination, and vision.

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR. THE HUMAN BRAIN LEARNS BEST IN ANALOG.

Some of these repurposed brain regions specialize in object recognition: they help us instantly distinguish an apple from an orange, for example, based on their distinct features, yet classify both as fruit. Similarly, when we learn to read and write, we begin to recognize letters by their particular arrangements of lines, curves and hollow spaces—a tactile learning process that requires both our eyes and hands.

In research by Karin James of Indiana University Bloomington, the reading circuits of five-year-old children crackled with activity when they practiced writing letters by hand but not when they typed letters on a keyboard. And when people read cursive writing or intricate characters such as Japanese kanji, the brain literally goes through the motions of writing, even if the hands are empty.

The more you read on screens, the more your brain adapts to the "non-linear" kind of reading we do on computers and phones. Your eyes dart around, you stop halfway through a paragraph to check a link or read a text message. Then, when you go back to good old-fashioned paper, it can be harder to concentrate.

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR. THE HUMAN BRAIN LEARNS BEST IN ANALOG.

In one study (1 below), researchers found that 3- and 4-year-old children had more activation in language regions of the brain when they read a book with an adult like a parent than when they listened to an audiobook or read from a digital app. When they read on an iPad, activation was the lowest of all. In another (2 below) study, MRI scans of 8- to 12-year-olds showed stronger reading circuits in those who spent more time reading paper books than those who spent their time on screens.

1

Review > Acta Paediatr. 2015 Jul;104(7):648-56. doi: 10.1111/apa.13018. Epub 2015 May 7.

From emergent literacy to reading: how learning to read changes a child's brain

Tzipi Horowitz-Kraus [1 2 3], John S Hutton [1]

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 25847632 DOI: 10.1111/apa.13018

2

> Acta Paediatr. 2018 Apr;107(4):685-693. doi: 10.1111/apa.14176. Epub 2017 Dec 27.

Brain connectivity in children is increased by the time they spend reading books and decreased by the length of exposure to screen-based media

Tzipi Horowitz-Kraus [1 2 3 4], John S Hutton [2 3]

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 29215151 DOI: 10.1111/apa.14176

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR. THE HUMAN BRAIN LEARNS BEST IN ANALOG.

For older students, significant research shows that comprehension suffers when they read from a screen.

A large 2019 meta-analysis of 33 different studies showed that students understood more informational text when they read on paper. A study by the Reboot Foundation, evaluating thousands of students across 90 countries including the U.S., found that fourth graders who used tablets in nearly all their classes scored 14 points lower on a reading test than students who never used them.

Researchers called the score gap “equivalent to a full grade level” of learning. Students who used technology “every day for several hours during the school day” underperformed the most, while the gap shrank or even disappeared when students spent less than half an hour a day on a laptop or tablet.

Why do students understand more of what they read when it’s in a book? Part of the issue is distraction, says Julie Coiro, a researcher at the University of Rhode Island. Kid-friendly reading apps like Epic! offer thousands of books that often contain images, links, and videos within the body of the text. These are meant to enhance the reading experience, but they often drag children away from concentrating on the meaning of the text. Even in reading experiments where students weren’t allowed to browse the web or click on embedded links, though, **they still performed worse.**

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR. THE HUMAN BRAIN LEARNS BEST IN ANALOG.

When kids use a Chromebook, they are in the same digital space for learning as they are for gaming or using Roblox for Fortnite. So, that's where their mind is.

The distraction is everywhere. **From YouTube to proxy websites, to VPNs, to trading messages on Google Docs, learning is compromised on devices that aren't made for learning.**

(Persistence of Print - 2017) Among University students: nearly 92% said they concentrated best when reading in print, and more than four-fifths reported that if cost were the same, they would prefer print for both schoolwork and pleasure reading. Students reported they were more likely to re-read printed material than digital; they were also more likely to multitask when reading onscreen.

A word on student privacy and technology in the classroom:

- A December 13, 2022 report from Internet Safety Labs found 96 percent of the apps schools require or recommend aren't safe for children, primarily because they share information with third parties or contain ads.
- According to Lisa LeVasseur, ED, these apps are "monetizing your data, selling it to data brokers that are building these ever-growing portfolios on you."

Protect Young Eyes - Low-Tech Classrooms

08

Finally, consider the most recent PISA results, shared in these slides from a recent presentation:

THE 2022 PISA RESULTS ARE IN

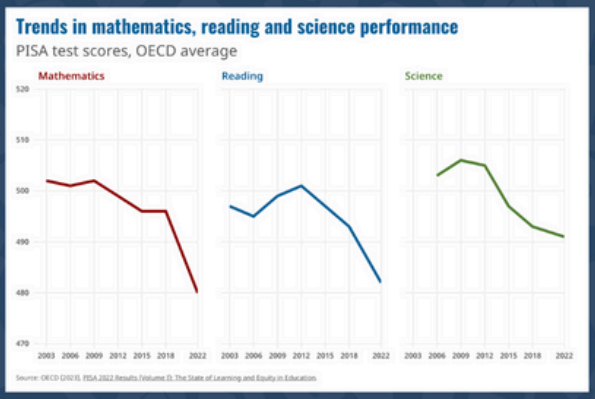
The results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) were released in December 2023. It's an international standardized test of fifteen-year-olds and the first look at how countries compare post-pandemic and, the impact of digital distraction on learning.

PISA

Since 2003, 15-year-olds globally have been assessed in math, reading, and science.

It's called the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the 2022 results were shared in December. 690,000 students from 81 countries participated. There was an unprecedented 15-point drop in math scores globally.

Reading scores also experienced their sharpest drop in the PISA's 20-year history.

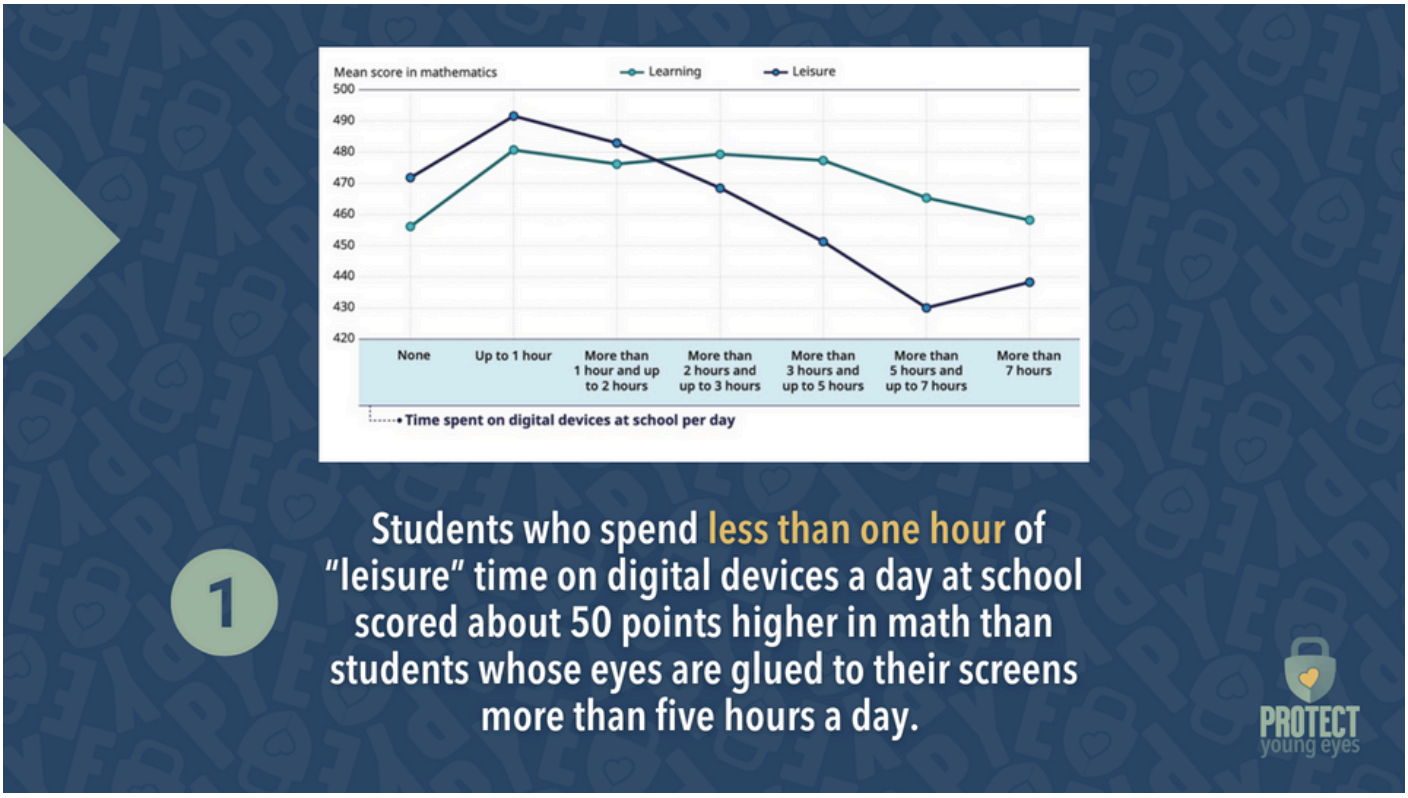


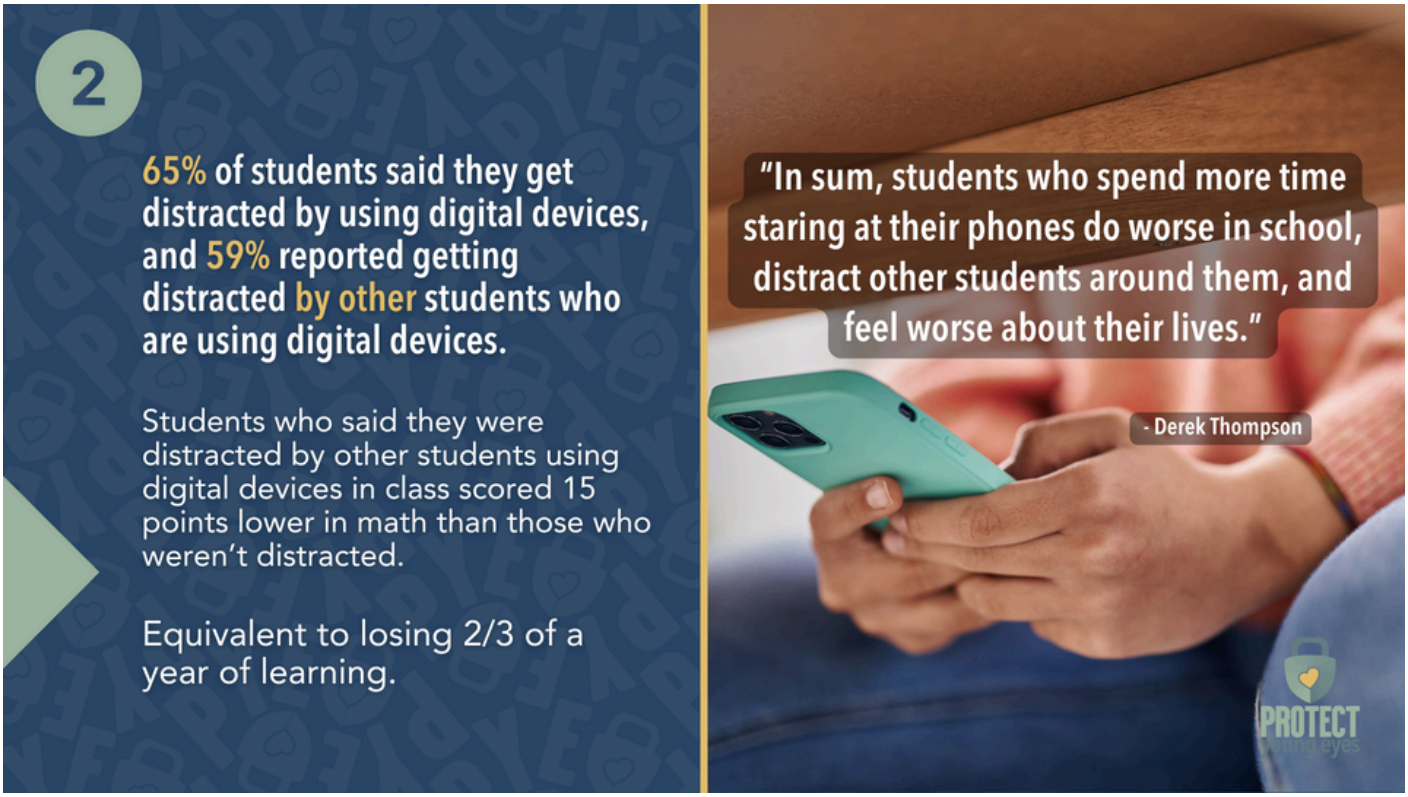
For reference, a 20-point drop is the equivalent of losing one full school year of education.

For the first time, the 2022 PISA asked students about technology distractions. There were multiple key findings.

Protect Young Eyes - Low-Tech Classrooms

09





ADDITIONAL RESEARCH - IMPACTS OF SCREENS ON LEARNING

Abstract 2: Participants viewed a 30-minute videotaped lecture during which they were interrupted by receiving text messages requiring responses. Results indicated that the High Texting group scored significantly worse (10.6% lower) than the No/Low Texting Interruption group.

Rosen, et al. (2011). An Empirical Examination of the Educational Impact of Text Message-Induced Task Switching in the Classroom: Educational Implications and Strategies to Enhance Learning. Psicologia Educativa,163-177. Retrieved from https://www.psychologytoday.com/sites/default/files/attachments/40095/anempiricalexaminationoftheeducationalimpactoftextmessage-inducedtaskswitchingintheclassroom-educati.pdf

Abstract 3: Results from two experiments indicate that even when people are successful at maintaining sustained attention—as when avoiding the temptation to check their phones—the mere presence of these devices reduces available cognitive capacity. Moreover, these cognitive costs are highest for those highest smartphone dependence.

Ward et al. (2017). Brain Drain: The Mere Presence of One's Own Smartphone Reduces Available Cognitive Capacity. JACR, 140-154. Retrieved from https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/691462

Abstract 4: Results of two studies reported here provide further evidence that the "mere presence" of a cell phone may be sufficiently distracting to produce diminished attention and deficits in task performance, especially for tasks with greater attentional and cognitive demands., especially for tasks with greater attentional and cognitive demands.

Thorton et al. (2014). Brain Drain: The mere presence of a cell phone may be distracting: Implications for attention and task performance. Social Psychology v. 45, 479-488. Retrieved from https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2014-52302-001.

Abstract 5: A longitudinal study published in 2020 looked at cognitive and emotional functioning in children over time, between ages 4 and 8, measured against their daily screen time. The study found excessive screen time led to emotional dysregulation and negatively affected mathematics and literacy in school-age students.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH - IMPACTS OF SCREENS ON LEARNING

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Abstract 6: In this systematic review and meta-analysis of data from 42 studies, a greater quantity of screen use (i.e., hours per day/week) was negatively associated with child language, while the better quality of screen use (i.e., educational programs and co-viewing with caregivers) were positively associated with child language skills.

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Pornography in School - Findings from Common Sense Media (2022) Teens and Pornography Report

- 41% reported seeing pornography during the school day; 44% of these teens reported viewing pornography on school-owned devices (this equals 13% of all teen respondents).
- 31% of this group [during the school day group] viewed pornography while attending school in person
- Teens who attended private schools (including religious schools) were nearly twice as likely as teens who said they attended traditional public schools to say they had ever seen pornography during the school day (50% vs. 26%).
- 41% of respondents who attended charter or magnet schools said they had seen pornography during the school day versus 27% of teens who were homeschooled.

Full PDF: https://www.commonsensemedia.org/research/teens-and-pornography

WHAT IS PROTECT YOUNG EYES?

Founded by Chris McKenna, Protect Young Eyes uses:

- A constantly updated website that explains the latest digital trends;
- Live presentations at schools and churches to students, educators, and parents around the country;
- The Table - our private community for caregivers.
- Our Be Tech Ready in-class digital wellness curriculum for grades K-12.

We show families, schools, and churches how to create safer digital places. Interested in learning more? Contact Michele, the Executive Master of Details at ProtectYoungEyes.com, or contact us via one of the channels below.

Mobile: 616-450-6719
Email: info@protectyoungeyes.com
Website: protectyoungeyes.com


ProtectYoungEyes

Protect Young Eyes


@protecteyes

PROTECT young eyes™

PHONE-FREE SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATOR TOOLKIT | SUPPORTING DATA

Benefits of Phone-Free Policy

Phone-Free Schools Movement's in depth discussions with administrators who have effectively implemented phone-free policies have consistently highlighted the same positive outcomes. Below are some of the tangible benefits noted by these administrators:

- **Less distractions:** Teachers report improved focus, attention and comprehension leading to better skills and grades.
- **Less cyberbullying**
- **Fewer fights and social media related drama:** Administrators report spending less time on discipline referrals.
- **Increased engagement:** Students engage more with their peers and teachers both in and outside of the classroom.
- **Improved attendance:** Students aren't texting their parents to call them out of school
- **Boosted efficiency:** Teachers report being ahead of schedule on their lesson plans because they aren't spending time policing phones, and because students are completing classwork and assignments faster.
- **More reading:** Phone-free schools report an increase in books checked out from their libraries.
- **Improved teacher morale and retention**
- **Less mid-class absenteeism:** Students request to use the restroom less frequently and trips to the restroom are shorter because students aren't using that time to be on their phones.
- **More vibrant lunchrooms:** Lunchrooms at phone-free schools are markedly louder because students are having face-to-face conversations with their peers.
- **Less cheating**
- **Less reported stress among students:** School counselors are seeing a decrease in the rate of mental health related student visits.

In summary, a bell-to-bell phone-free policy provides students with an average of 7 hours each school day to be fully present and free from the pressures and harms of phones and social media. This policy helps them restore connections and reclaim a critical period in their development.

Coversheet

LEVY OVERVIEWS OF BALLOT PROPOSITIONS NO. 1 AND NO. 2

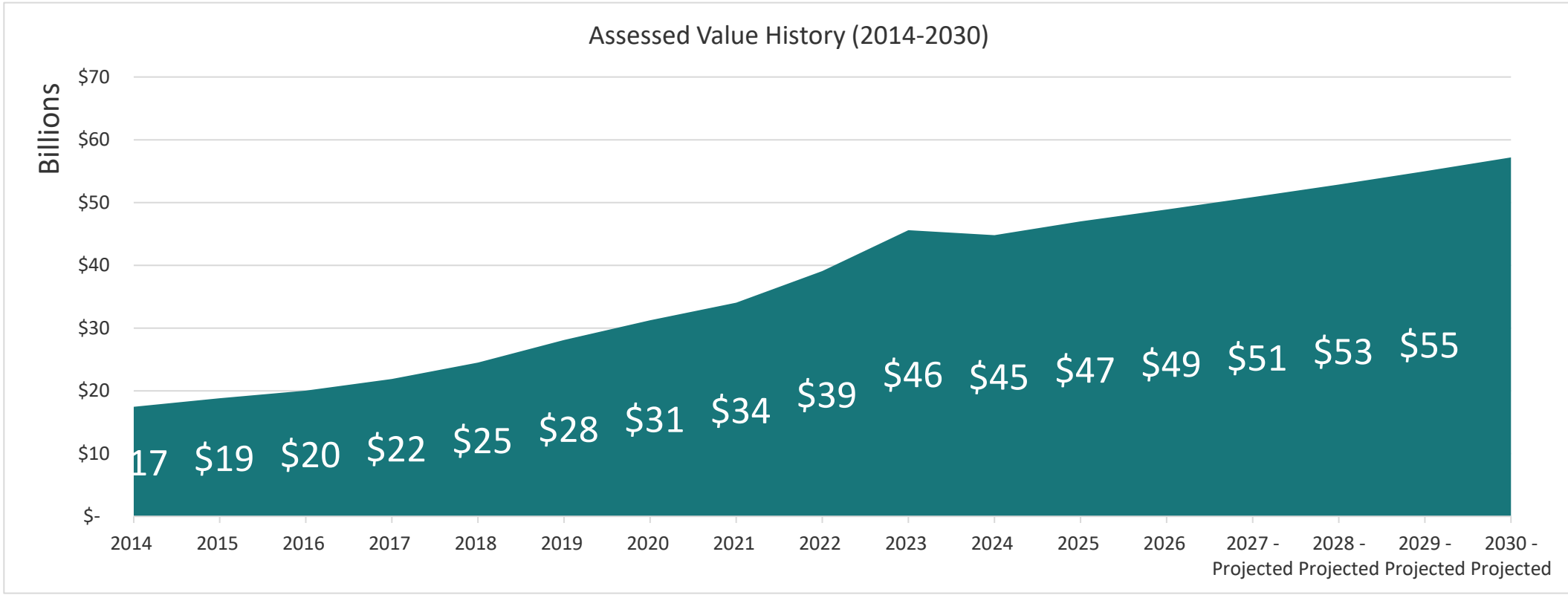
Section:	III. LEVY OVERVIEWS
Item:	A. LEVY OVERVIEWS OF BALLOT PROPOSITIONS NO. 1 AND NO. 2
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	LEVY UPDATE_16OCT2025.pdf

Tacoma EP&O (Prop 1) and Technology Capital Levy (Prop 2)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS STUDY SESSION

OCTOBER 16, 2025

Assessed Value History



Tacoma Educational Programs & Operations “Enrichment Levy”

Last renewed February 2022 for collections beginning in 2023

“Enrichment Levy”

Can only be used to enhance the basic education program

Levy calculations are currently the LESSER of:

$2,500 per student or

$1.50 per $1,000 of assessed value

Submitted through OSPI for review and approval

Prop 1 Levy Highlights : Educational Programs and Operations Levy

Used for nearly 500 staff positions and services:

- Additional classroom teachers
- Librarians, nurses, counselors
- Para-educators, educational assistants
- Custodians
- Office staff, professional staff
- Mental health services
- Student safety and security
- Innovative programming
- Textbooks and instructional materials
- Athletics, arts, music
- After-school enrichment activities
- Preschool programming
- Partnerships
- Building operations support
- Students with physical disabilities

Prop 1
Estimated EPO Levy Amounts for Resolution

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Levy based on AV calculation	$ 82,000,000	$ 127,096,457	$ 132,180,315	$ 137,467,528	$ 142,966,229
Levy based on per pupil calculation	$ 82,000,000	$ 110,910,832	$ 117,376,943	$ 123,515,875	$ 129,975,756
Maximum allowed to collect (lesser of the two) based on current legislation		**$ 110,910,832**	**$ 117,376,943**	**$ 123,515,875**	**$ 129,975,756**
		2026-27	**2027-28**	**2028-29**	**2029-30**
Estimated school year collections		$ 97,212,880	$ 114,313,300	$ 120,607,249	$ 126,915,064

Rationale and Facts:

- Requirement to pass - 50% of the vote
  - Previous pass rate - 68% (2022)
- Makes up 14% of our total budget in 2025-26, 17% in 2027 and beyond
- Only can collect what the legislative formula allows and up to what is voter approved
- Levy laws increased authority beginning in 2026
- SPED no longer can be charged to levy
- Ask for the higher of the two to ensure we collect the maximum of the two calculations and in anticipation that the legislature may change the calculation basis

Prop 2
Levy Highlights : Capital Technology Levy

Used for:

- 92 staff positions:
  - Technology Services, SIS/Enrollment, and Instructional Facilitators
  - Fractional FTE for Librarians and other professional staff
- 1:1 student laptops, staff computers, and endpoint devices
- Electronic security systems and data privacy solutions
- Classroom and display technology
- Software renewals & critical system support
- Network, telecom, and radio infrastructure
- Lifecycle support of audio/visual technology
- Standardized classroom charging solutions
- New & expanded academic and administrative applications
- Digital textbooks and electronic instructional materials
- Ongoing professional development for teachers & staff

Prop 2
Estimated Capital Levy Amounts for Resolution

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Requested Levy Collection Amount	$ 31,000,000	$ 42,500,000	$ 42,500,000	$ 42,500,000	$ 42,500,000

Rationale and Facts:

- Current levy last approved in 2022
- Requirement to pass - 50% of the vote
  - Previous Pass Rates: 66% (2022)
- Voters can approve any amount
  - There are no limits
  - Amounts need to be reasonable to the taxpayer
- 4 Year levy
- Plan allows for sustained operations as well as accommodating continued increase in demand of technology in classrooms

Impact to the Homeowner

Three components to the district's current tax rates:

- Educational Programs & Operations Levy
- Technology Capital Levy
- Bond Repayment Levy

The total taxes paid by each taxpayer will depend on the value of the home

- The higher the value of your home, the more taxes you pay
- Assessed values are likely to rise in the coming years
- Average tax rate over next four years will decline compared to last four years

Average home in Tacoma in 2025 (Pierce County Assessor, September 2025)

- $517,526

School taxes are one of many taxes that can be assessed each year

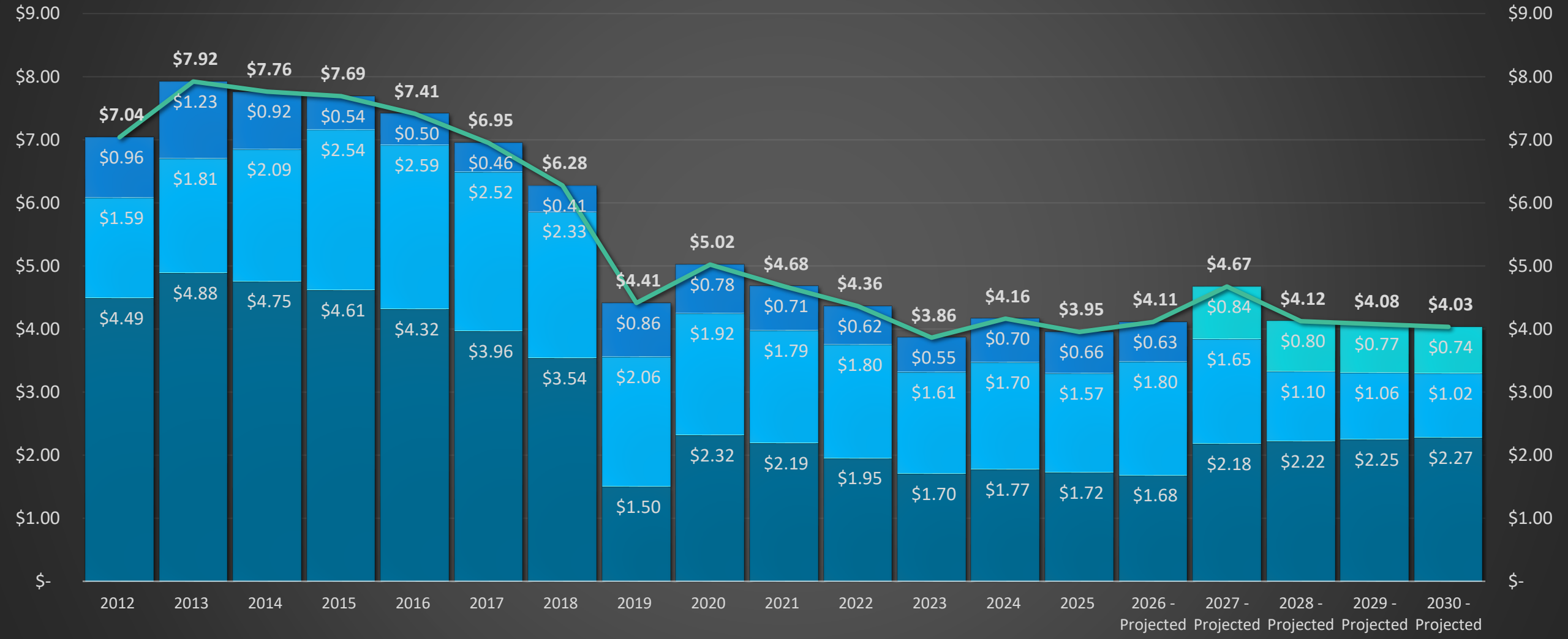
- Assessor releases tax information just before the February election
- District estimates conservatively

Impact to the Average Tacoma Homeowner Over Four Years Proposition 1 & 2 Only

February 2026 Proposition 1 and 2- Anticipated Homeowner Impact for Average Home							
Year	**Average Assessed Value of Home**	**Prop 1 EPO Tax**	**Prop 2 Tech Tax**	**Total Tax Per Year**	**Prop 1 EPO Tax per Month**	**Prop 2 Tech Tax per Month**	**Total Taxes per Month**
2023	$ 474,038	$ 808	$ 261	$ 1,069	$ 67.34	$ 21.72	$ 89.06
2024	$ 503,570	$ 893	$ 350	$ 1,243	$ 74.40	$ 29.17	$ 103.57
2025	$ 517,526	$ 892	$ 343	$ 1,236	$ 74.34	$ 28.62	$ 102.96
2026 - Projected	$ 538,227	$ 903	$ 341	$ 1,244	$ 75.24	$ 28.45	$ 103.68
Average	**$ 508,340**	**$ 874**	**$ 324**	**$ 1,198**	**$ 72.83**	**$ 26.99**	**$ 99.82**
2027 - Projected	$ 559,756	$ 1,221	$ 468	$ 1,689	$ 101.76	$ 39.00	$ 140.76
2028 - Projected	$ 582,146	$ 1,292	$ 468	$ 1,760	$ 107.70	$ 38.99	$ 146.69
2029 - Projected	$ 593,789	$ 1,334	$ 459	$ 1,793	$ 111.15	$ 38.24	$ 149.40
2030 - Projected	$ 605,665	$ 1,377	$ 450	$ 1,827	$ 114.71	$ 37.51	$ 152.22
Average	**$ 585,339**	**$ 1,306**	**$ 461**	**$ 1,767**	**$ 108.83**	**$ 38.44**	**$ 147.27**
Variance	**$ 76,999**	**$ 432**	**$ 137**	**$ 569**	**$ 36.00**	**$ 11.45**	**$ 47.45**

Above calculation assumption is based on current levy law. If the legislature changes the current law, the tax impacts would be at a higher amount

Total School Funding Rates/$1,000 AV
If Voters Approve Replacement Levies in 2026
(2012-2030)



Timeline

September through December

- Finalize resolution with Bond Counsel – **In Process**
- Submit plan for OSPI review of levy expenditure – **Approved**
- First reading of Resolutions – October 9 - **Complete**
- Second reading of Resolution – October 23

November through February

- Present informational campaign
- Filing of resolution with Pierce County Auditor – December 12, 2025
- Statements of “For” and “Against” – December 16, 2025
- Ballots mailed – January 23, 2026
- **Election date - February 10, 2026**
- Results certified - February 20, 2026

Facts & Information Campaign

Communications Department will share information with the public through a Facts & Information campaign.

- Website: Tacomaschools.org/vote
- Facts & Information mailer will be shared in our school district boundary in January
- "Spotlight" newsletters will include information about the levies
- Presentations will be available to community groups through a TPS Speakers Bureau
- Reminders on how to register to vote, when to expect ballots in the mail and where to drop off your ballot